

Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC)

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT)

WISE COUNTY/TOWN OF BIG STONE GAP WATER SHORTAGE

SITUATION REPORT # 31

1230 Hours November 18, 2005

New Information in Bold Italics

Next Conference Call is scheduled for Monday, November 21, 2005, 0930 hours

Information for Situation Report should be submitted to the VEOC no later than 1200 hours daily

SUMMARY

The town of Big Stone Gap continues to experience water shortages due to drought like conditions. Actions are being coordinated with surrounding communities and the state to alleviate the adverse conditions. Contingency plans are in place for these actions to continue through November 30, 2005.

EXECUTIVE ACTION

EOC Activation: The Virginia VEOC is at Increased Readiness condition and augmented with limited staffing.

State of Emergency: On October 7, 2005, Governor Mark R. Warner declared a state of emergency to exist for Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to assist these localities in responding to a critical water shortage. Governor Warner directed appropriate assistance be rendered by agencies of the state government to respond to needs in Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to alleviate adverse conditions created by the water shortage. Executive Order 99 (2005) was amended to include an Open Burning Ban on Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap.

Protective Actions: Local Emergency Declared: Wise County declared a local emergency on September 26, 2005.

WEATHER

Forecast: Southwest VA: Friday 18 November – Partly sunny, high temperatures upper 30s to low 40s, light winds. Friday night – Mostly clear, low temperatures upper teens to low 20s, light winds. Saturday 19 November – Mostly sunny, high temperatures low 50s, light winds. Saturday night – Mostly clear, low temperatures upper 20s to low 30s, light winds. Sunday 20 November – Partly cloudy, high temperatures low 50s, light winds. Sunday night – Mostly cloudy, low temperatures upper 20s to low 30s, 20% chance of snow showers and rain showers after midnight. Monday 21 November – Partly cloudy, high temperatures low to mid 40s, 20% chance of rain showers and snow showers in the morning.

OPERATIONS SECTION

Local Liaison: VDEM Local Support Services Division Region Four Coordinator is available as needed.

EMERGENCY SERVICES BRANCH

ESF 4 – Firefighting: Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF)
The VDOF has signs in place notifying residents of the burn ban.

ESF 8 – Health & Medical:

Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

VDH continues monitoring absenteeism in Big Stone Gap schools. No new cases of chickenpox reported and VDH will continue monitoring chickenpox for additional 21 days. Radiological test results are still pending, but are expected soon. VDH is compiling reports on current and future potential water sources such as the Bullet Mine and water test results are being compiled into a report. Well at Mt. Empire Community College and two wells in Appalachia are to be tested once pumps are activated.

ESF 13 - Public Safety & Security:

Virginia Department of Military Affairs/National Guard (VDMA/VNG)

The VNG continues the blivet support mission. Eleven blivets are in place. Twelve soldiers remain on mission. No additional personnel needed at this time. Pumping operations at Powell River Cave #1 start at 0600 and end at 2000. Pump maintenance performed from 2000 to 2200. **VNG developing transition plans for blivet operations and cave operations in coordination with local governments.**

HUMAN SERVICES BRANCH

ESF 11 – Agriculture & Natural Resources:

Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

DEQ continues to work with the town of Big Stone Gap to monitor water production, water sales and calculate the amount of water losses on a monthly basis. **Requested loss water report faxed to DEQ on 17 November.**

INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT BRANCH

ESF 1 – Transportation:

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

VDOT has four message boards in the Big Stone Gap area and messages are being changed frequently so members of the community do not become complacent. A VDOT tractor is being used to pull stainless steel tankers of water

LOGISTICS SECTION

ESF 7 – Resource Support:

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

The VEOC is coordinating requests for assistance from the locality and state agencies, and is facilitating conference calls with the locality and state agencies. **VEOC requested status on replacement pump for cave operations and detailed justification for extension of blivet and cave operations.**

LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Current Powell River stream flow is **34 cubic feet per second and falling**. Plans are being made to winterize and protect temporary above ground water facilities. **Wise County and Big Stone Gap pursuing purchase of electric pump for cave pumping operations. Type of pump has been identified and Big Stone Gap is working logistics for installation. Big Stone Gap submitting request for extension of blivet operations for additional 30 days. Incident Management Team has developed plan for blivet management. All local governments are encouraged to develop and implement plans for transition of water supply management utilizing only local and private resources.**

Powell River Cave #1 produced approximately 201,400 gallons of water on 17 November. A team from Radford will enter the cave in the near future to determine volume and re-charge capability.

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